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BLIGHT-RESISTANT ORIENTAL CHESTNUTS

THE CHINESE CHESTNUT, *Castanea molissima*, was introduced by the U. S. Department of Agriculture in its search for blight-resistant species, and is the best of chestnuts so introduced.

The nuts are larger than those of the American chestnut and are equally sweet and good. They ripen earlier in the season than the American and up to the present time have been much less subject to the attacks of the chestnut weevil.

In form and size the tree grows something like a large apple tree, and stands drouth remarkably well. It is not at all particular as to soil, if it is not swampy. It has proven hardy down to temperatures of 30 degrees below zero, and seems equally at home on the sandy coastal plain or the Blue Ridge and Appalachian mountains.

The tree begins to bear at about five years from seed and produces regular crops thereafter. Blossoming does not occur until June, after all danger of frost is past.

Chestnuts bear heavier crops when cross pollenized, hence it is advisable to plant more than one tree of a species.

THE JAPANESE CHESTNUT, *Castanea crenata*, was introduced into this country more than a century ago, but never made much headway because of the American custom of eating chestnuts raw, and the better flavor of the American species. In Japan, where they are a common article of diet, they are always boiled or roasted. Cooked in this manner they make a very palatable substitute for potatoes, but with a higher flavor.

The nuts are larger than either the Chinese or American chestnut, some of the grafted horticultural strains being more than two inches across and the largest chestnuts grown.

In form, size and habit of growth, the tree is similar to the Chinese. The leaves are somewhat smaller than the Chinese but the burrs are larger. The tree comes into bearing even earlier than the Chinese and bears regular, heavy crops.

Its hardiness is attested by old trees growing in Ontario, Canada. It is probably not so drouth-resistant as the Chinese species.

PRICE ON CHINESE and JAPANESE CHESTNUT TREES;

2 to 3 foot trees, EACH 60 cents

10 trees, \$5.00

Carrying Charges Paid by the Purchaser.

WHITFORD NURSERY,

FARINA, ILLINOIS.

BLIGHT-RESISTANT ORIENTAL CHESTNUTS.

In 1912 the U. S. Department of Agriculture established a chestnut orchard at Bell, Maryland, in which were planted every variety of chestnut available. Now only the Chinese and Japanese chestnuts and their hybrids, are alive, the others all having been lost by the blight disease. The remaining trees bear annual crops of large, sweet nuts.

We have grown chestnuts commercially since 1898, and through the years have found them to be a very profitable crop. Our first importation of Chinese chestnut seed was made in 1928 and we now have a great number of this variety in bearing. These have never been sprayed or pruned and we have never found one afflicted with blight or any other disease or pest. This makes them very inexpensive to produce. However, we do cultivate them part time, alternating each row space with lespedeza as a cover crop to maintain humus and to prevent corrosion. We have had temperatures 15 degrees below zero with no tree injury. They bloom in June after danger from spring frosts are past and BEAR ANNUALLY. We have had yields of thirty pounds from eight year old trees. We think these trees will thrive in any locality or on any soil that will grow corn. Planting distant from thirty to forty feet. Harvesting the crop begins about September 15th and they all drop to the ground by the 15th of October. They shatter out of the burrs and can be picked up and sacked at a cost not to exceed 2 1/2¢ per lb. Our average price the last three years has been 15¢ per lb. FOB. Quality is much better than the imported Italian nuts coming onto the market later and not competing on the market with our crop. Our customers come back for more each season.

Oriental chestnut trees, both Japanese and Chinese are of rapid growth and begin to bear in the fourth year. Heavy commercial production commences at seven or eight years, when trees should be around twelve feet tall with six-inch trunks and a twelve to fourteen foot spread. There is a variation in seedling trees as to habit of growth and size of nuts, but all are of good quality. If the tree does not come up to our requirements we top-work them with scions from our best bearing trees. The nuts are larger than the American Sweet and as good or better quality. Chinese Hairy chestnuts (McIlissima) are sweeter flavored and prefer red over the Japanese (Grenata). The latter nut very large.

We have data on a row of nineteen Chinese chestnut trees planted in 1933. They are now low spreading trees with 6-inch to 8-inch trunks, twelve to fourteen feet high and spread sixteen to eighteen feet, and as handsome a row of trees as one would wish. In 1934 they bore a few well filled burrs. In 1937 the nineteen trees bore a crop of 128 lbs of nuts. In 1937 the nineteen trees bore a crop of 126 lbs of nuts. In 1938, 160 lbs. of nuts and 1939 crop was 500 lbs., averaging 26- lbs per tree at six years in the orchard. At ten years of age these trees should double in size and more than double in production. At fifteen years they should produce a hundred pounds of nuts per tree and continue to grow and bear increasing crops each succeeding year.

WHITFORD NURSERY. FARINA, ILL.
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